

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XII.

BOSTON, MAY, 1904.

No. 12

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY: 50 cents a year. Single copy, 5 cents

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second-class mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

GEO. H. ELLIS CO., PRINTERS, 272 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

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A HAPPY MOOD.

My heart is glad, and earth is fair
With God's warm sunshine everywhere;
And looking up, so lovingly,
My Father seems to smile on me.
I scarce believe that death and woe
Come ever to this land below,
And yet more sure than aught I know
The time must come for me to go
Or lay a form beloved low.

But now my heart is filled with song,
As full of life I pass along.
Why should I check the joyous thrill
Because some day I must lie still?
Be it when earth is white with snow,
When trees are bare, and cold winds blow?
I cannot tell, I only know
The time must come for me to go
Or lay some form beloved low.

For this no gloom my heart shall wear,
But still rejoice while skies are fair;
Take all the brightness that I may,
The blessings sent from day to day,
Nor dread to hear the call, although
It comes to me 'mid summer's glow,
Though all the while I surely know
The time must come for me to go
Or lay a form beloved low.

Still health and strength shall make me glad;
Too soon, perchance, shall I grow sad,
Too soon believe that care and pain
Must come to all who here remain.
Though life is short and I must grow
Cold when the autumn winds moan low,
I will be glad, e'en if I know
The time must come for me to go
Or lay a form beloved low.

And may not e'en the angels love
Bright, happy faces raised above?
And joyful songs may upward bear
As gladly as an earnest prayer;
But yet some hearts must ache I know,
And tears from some bright eyes must flow,
Because, though early violets blow,
Or earth is fair with summer's glow,
They lay a form beloved low.

And *this* I know: hearts that beat light,
And strive to make life's pathway bright,
Whose words are true and deeds are kind,
May leave sweet memories behind,
Nor dread as God appoints to go
In bloom of youth or when the brow
Is whitened with life's winter snow,
Nor any vain regret will know
When called to lay their loved ones low.

—*Bessie Bently, in "The Liberal Christian."*

THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE RELIGION OF JESUS.

I.

There is no monopoly of goodness and self-sacrifice in the gospel. Far from seeking to destroy the principles of faith and morality taught in other religions, Jesus completed them in his teaching, carrying them out to their highest development and putting them into practical use. He rejected nothing of the insight and aspiration of other prophets of righteousness, but accepted and embodied in his own teaching whatever word of spiritual truth human experience had already proved to be of value to the world. Hence his religion includes the essential elements in all other systems of religion, is as old as human thought and feeling, and is found in its rudiments in all genuine attempts to come into right relations

with God and man. What others dimly discerned as stars are seen through a cloud, he perceived clearly; what others thought *might* be true of the spiritual world and the Divine Nature, he became conscious of as a part of his daily experience, and was able to make plain to his disciples and friends, so that they, too, could see "the deep things of God." The "true light" that shone like the word of God in his spiritual nature was the same light as "lightens every man who comes into the world."

Moreover, many things which stand apart in other systems of religion, or are brought together in a partial and subordinate fashion, are so united in the teaching and life of Jesus as to make his religion of universal application. Thus you cannot tell whether its idea of God or of man has the highest place. For, although the first commandment is to love God, nevertheless, "the second is like unto it, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" In Brahmanism the unseen and eternal verities of the spiritual world are as strongly emphasized as in the New Testament. But Brahmanism makes little account of human hopes and fears and needs, and by its system of castes denies the obligation of man to his fellow-man. On the other hand, Buddhism—which was a revolt from the authority of Brahmanism, rejecting its system of castes—taught human brotherhood, laying such stress on the duty of man to man as to lose sight entirely of heavenly inspiration and divine providence. But in "the good news of the grace of God," as lived and taught by Jesus, God and man belong together as Father and child, and obligation to divinity is co-ordinate with duty to humanity. Then, too, in the gospel this life and the spiritual life, this world of the senses and the ideal world of the soul, are bound together by inseparable ties, interpenetrating each other in such close intimacy as wholly to exclude the thought of death as an end in itself, making it only a change of conditions, a means of rising into a higher state of being,—

"A covered way
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight."

And so our great Teacher, who sometimes spent the entire night in communion with God, refreshing his soul at the fountain-head of spiritual truth and love, spent his days in going about doing good to man, not neglecting to renew his physical strength with ma-

terial food when asked to take dinner with this or that friend or admirer, although he thus ran the risk of being called "a gluttonous man and a winebibber." In his idea of duty, divine love and human service were in close reciprocal relations. His heart and mind and hand were all correlated in a perfect harmony; his sentiments of worship, his trust in God, and his love for man were equally united and belonged together, forming a vital part of his common, every-day experience, blending freely with all the practical affairs of business or pleasure.

Thus we see how the teaching of Jesus rises above other systems of religious thought, both as being inclusive of what is best in the ideas of the other great masters and also as harmonizing elements of faith and duty that are elsewhere in antagonism; and we are now better prepared to consider the distinctive feature in his religion,—that which gives it an absolute quality, making it capable of becoming the universal faith of mankind, as Christian people fondly believe.

The distinctive feature of the gospel,—that which differentiates it from all other systems of religion, makes Jesus the "Light of the world," and continues to draw truth-seekers and truth-lovers to him amid all the changes of modern times,—this peculiar principle of religious faith is the sublime conviction that the ever-living God is the Father and Friend of every human soul. This is Jesus' original contribution to religious thought, the secret of his personal power and authority, the explanation of his constantly increasing influence and leadership, and the sufficient reason for our following him as the King of men, the Saviour of the world.

Do not imagine, however, that this ideal conviction of intimate personal kinship between the divine Father and the human soul can in any way be separated from the daily life of Jesus. It was part and parcel of his life, as much interwoven with it as the air he breathed. His belief and practice must be taken together in order to grasp his message to the world, that "good news of the grace of God" which he preached. As the editor of the *Outlook* insists, "Christ did not found a religion, he lived a life." Or, rather, his religion was his life, the life he shared with God and man; and it was his faith in God, and his hope for man as involved in this faith, which gave his teaching its power and authority. This was likewise the source of the abounding life in his soul, the fountain from which flowed the "life more abundant"

that inspired his disciples, and is gradually but surely vitalizing the human race.

More than this: Jesus' idea of God was so different from any other that he could truly say, "No man comes to the Father but by me." In his thought every human soul was not only a child of God, but, whether wise or foolish, strong or weak, good or bad, was likewise so dear to the Father's heart that he sent his well-beloved Son, the elder brother, to seek and save the wandering and lost members of the divine family, and restore them to their rightful place in the divine household as obedient sons and daughters. His spiritual insight perceived in each soul a divine germ in which lay the possibility of unlimited growth and progress, the power to become perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect.—*Alexander T. Bowser.*

THE STILL HOUR.

HE CHOSE THIS PATH FOR THEE.

He chose this path for thee.
No feeble chance nor hard, relentless fate,
But love, his love, hath placed thy footsteps here;
He knew the way was rough and desolate,
Knew how thy heart would often sink with fear,
Yet tenderly he whispers, "Child, I see
This path is best for thee."

He chose this path for thee,
Though well he knew sharp thorns would
tear thy feet,
Knew how the brambles would obstruct the
way,
Knew all the hidden dangers thou wouldst
meet,
Knew how thy faith would falter day by day;
And still the whisper echoes, "Yes, I see
This path is best for thee."

He chose this path for thee
'Een while he knew the fearful midnight
gloom
Thy timid shrinking soul must travel through,
How towering rocks would oft before thee
loom,
And phantoms grim would meet thy fright-
ened view;
Still comes the whisper, "My beloved, I see
"This path is best for thee."

He chose this path for thee.
What needst thou more? This sweetest
truth to know,
That all along these strange, bewildering
ways,
O'er rocky steeps and where dark rivers flow,
His loving arms shall bear thee "all the days";
A few steps more, and thou thyself shalt see
This path was best for thee

—*Selected.*

OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

O Jesus, it is thou who biddest me say,
Father! My Father! oh how that name
rejoices my heart! My Father! I can no
longer feel alone, and whatever may happen
to me this day I feel I am protected, com-
forted, beloved.

Let me dwell on the sweetness of those
words, My Father! I need not lift my eyes
to heaven: thou art within me, and where
thou dwellest heaven must be.

Yes, heaven is within me, heaven with all
its peace and love; and, if I keep free from
guile this day, my day will be one of heavenly
joy, and, in addition, the privilege of suffering
for thee.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

To hallow thy name, O Lord, is to pro-
nounce it with reverence and awe.

To-day I will pray more fervently, try to
realize thy presence, thy goodness, thy love,
and my heart shall be a sanctuary into which
nothing shall penetrate that could be dis-
pleasing unto thee.

To hallow thy name is to call upon it fer-
vently, above all, before taking an important
step. When there are difficulties to be over-
come, I will softly whisper the invocation
which is the secret of all holy living.—*The
Lord's Prayer, in "Gold Dust."*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive
"Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 71
Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

The Cambridge Branch offers the follow-
ing books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20
Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

"Wee Macgregor"; "The Deemster";
"Quo Vadis"; "Three Men in a Boat"; "The
First Violin"; "Illustrated America"; "Euro-
pean Glimpses and Glances"; "New Songs
and Ballads," Norah Perry; "A Holiday Tour
in Europe"; Gray's "Structural and System-
atic Botany"; "Pride and Prejudice," Austen;
"Eben Holden"; Winner's "Easy System for
the Guitar"; "The Drawing-room Stage."

Juvenile.

"By England's Aid," "Condemned as a
Nihilist," "The Lion of St. Mark's," Henty;
"Six to Sixteen," "We and the World," Mrs.
Ewing; "Dream Children," Scudder.

Magazines.

The *New England Farmer*; the *Country Gentleman*, the *Rural New Yorker*; *McClure's*, 1901; *Harper's*, 1901; *Scribner's*, 1902; the *Strand*, 1902; *Century*, 1902-03.

REQUESTS.

[Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado.) 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club Secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I am teaching school in a very isolated part of Virginia,—fifteen miles from the railroad, surrounded by mountains, and cut off in a measure from the outside world. I am fond of reading, and would be glad to receive any books or reading matter. (Miss) Mary C. Preston, Swans, Amherst County, Virginia.

2. It has been a long time since I have received *The Cheerful Letter*, and I feel as if I was still a member. To have something good to read is more than bliss. Mrs. D. D. Jayne, 143 Lincoln Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

3. I thank those who have sent me books and papers. They have been of great help to me. I pass them on to others. I would be glad to receive the *Delineator* for 1904; "Composition and Rhetoric," Hart; "Primer," also pictures and clippings for my little girl's scrap-book. Mrs. N. A. Coleman, Pearch, Virginia.

4. I wish to thank the kind friends for reading sent me some time since, though I have not received anything for some time. I would be glad to have some books to help pass the lonely hours. I would be grateful for Maury's "Manual Geography" for my daughter, and suitable reading for her. I have also asked for some correspondents, but as yet have not received any letters, which

I would enjoy so much. Mrs. Lela C. Hernndon, Indiantown, Orange County, Virginia.

5. Master Delos P. Noftsoger, Globe, Arizona, would like to receive *Every Other Sunday* and other literature suited to his age. He is a schoolboy and belongs to the Salvation Army.

6. Mrs. Jessie Sikes, Diamond Hill, North Carolina, would be glad to receive any current numbers of the *Delineator*.

7. Mrs. C. B. Merrick, 14 Eighth Avenue, Haverhill, Mass., asks for *Success* and *Ledger Monthly*.

8. Miss Mary Mulkey, White Mound, Grayson County, Texas, would like to receive any one of Louisa M. Alcott's books, preferably "Rose in Bloom" and "Under the Lilacs," also Tarr's "Physical Geography" and a Teacher's Revised Edition of the Bible.

9. Alex Sherman, Orion, Michigan, R. F. D. No. 1, a young boy far away from his home, often gets homesick and longs for reading.

10. Mrs. W. H. Griffin, Stella, Virginia, asks for Longfellow's "Poems," "Robinson Crusoe," and "Cricket on the Hearth."

11. I am a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, and would be glad if some friend would send my girls some good reading,— "English Orphans," the *Ladies' Home Journal*, "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Please send the *Delineator*. I have sewing to do for people, and they always want the latest style. If any one will send them, I will be very, very grateful. I have received three of *The Cheerful Letters*. I do like so much to read them. We are living eight miles from any town, and we cannot get anything here easily. The Post-office is not very far, but it's only a little country office. Mrs. Fannie Ballard, Mangum, Richmond County, North Carolina.

12. Miss Ethel V. Bishop, Stuart, Virginia, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1904.

13. I am seventeen years old, and would like to receive reading matter suitable for me and my invalid sister, who is fourteen years of age. (Miss) Lydia E. Shortt, Floyd, R. F. D. No. 1, Virginia.

14. Lina M. Griggs, Ridgeway, Virginia, fourteen years of age, would be glad of suitable reading.

15. Mrs. J. G. Butterfield of Orion, Michigan, would be pleased to become a member of the Book Club, and to receive copies of

The Cheerful Letter, and would be gratified to receive reading matter from any of the kind Cheerful Letter friends.

16. A friend has given me one of *The Cheerful Letters*. I never saw one before. I am a very sickly girl and not able to buy reading of any kind. The people here cannot buy books necessary for their children, and we have no library. I will gladly give or lend any reading sent me. They are all so anxious for anything to read. I will be thankful for books and papers of any kind and also pictures for the children. They enjoy playing with pictures so much. (Miss) Hulda Hunter, Windom, Yancy County, North Carolina.

17. Carrie Shelton, Stella, Virginia, asks for music, with or without words.

18. Mrs. Mary J. Watkins, Harrison, Arkansas, asks for anything by Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

19. For the past two or three years, until *this year*, I have been receiving *The Cheerful Letter*, and from its different members books, papers, and magazines. All of these I very much enjoyed. But last year I "moved" twice, each time changing post-office address, and somehow I lost trace of all correspondents. Our family consists of myself, husband, and three children,—two boys ten and five years of age, and a baby girl two years old. Mr. Abbitt's health is very bad; he is often in bed. So you see that our limited financial supply has to go for other than reading matter. We like such reading as *Munsey*, *McClure*, *Harper's*, etc., and a good novel occasionally. There is one, "The Star Dreamer" that I am now anxious to read. Mrs. Emmett Abbitt, West Appomattox, Virginia.

20. Will some one send reading to Mrs. S. H. Bobbitt, Moravian Falls, Wilkes County, North Carolina? She is sixty-two years old and is fond of reading; would be glad of magazines or books. Mrs. Bobbitt and husband live alone, and would be so glad of something to read.

21. A geography and dictionary will be appreciated by Mrs. John Ellis, Verano, Virginia.

22. Mrs. D. W. Kallain, Wamadot, North Carolina, asks for any reading for herself and husband. Also "First Reader" for her little boy.

23. Miss Jennie Varner, Pessinger, North Carolina, will be glad of reading which she will pass on.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Rena Gamage's address has been changed from New Windsor, Illinois, to Macomb, Illinois, 521 W. Chase Street.

Mrs. M. E. Douglass, from Caruth to Malden, Missouri.

Mrs. Laura Hylbert, from Evelyn, West Virginia, to Gifford, Illinois, R. F. D. No. 25.

Mrs. Sallie Candle, from Polkton to Peachland, North Carolina.

Mrs. Ida Hunter, from Lone Grove to Sneed, Indian Territory.

Lina Thomas, from Charity to Elamsville, Virginia.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

JUSTICE TO CHILDREN.

Lord Palmerston, I believe, on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of an orphanage, made some remarks on child character which *Punch* afterward crystallized into a neat epigram: "A child's mind is a blank sheet of paper, and its address in after life depends on the way you direct it."

The idea provoked very energetic criticism at the time, the secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in particular, pointing out that children are born with evil and corrupt natures, and that education consists less in supplying what is wanted than in eradicating and correcting what is already there.

Both theories are true in part, and by joining them we get pretty near the truth. A child may have every evil tendency conceivable, and yet be as innocent as Lord Palmerston implied; for a child is absolutely guiltless of its own faults.

Indeed, a young child has absolutely no faults of its own. It stands to reason it has not, for surely it has no power to choose,— "I will be this, or that, or the other, on purpose, to annoy my parents." It could not buy its faults ready-made from the stores, and it has not had time to borrow them from its neighbors. Obviously, then, every fault the child has must be inherited or taught it by mismanagement; and in either case can the child possibly be to blame?

Suppose a child be born untruthful, spiteful, malicious, or stubborn, he is no more to

blame than he is for being born red-haired or lame or with eyes the same color as his father's.

Parents, whose consciences acquit them of having taught their little ones evil by mismanagement, still find grave faults in them. They will do well to ask themselves the question, "From whom did this poor child inherit that fretful temper, that self-esteem that will not own itself in the wrong, that stubborn will that insists on being considered before others, that untruthful tongue?"

But, however the faults came into the child's nature, there they are; and, if the child is to lead a happy and useful life, they must be cured. How is this to be done?

Most certainly not by treating a poor little one as a criminal for yielding to inherited tendencies,—tendencies he does not understand and sees no reason for resisting.

If a poor child is born with a twisted ankle, we do not say: "Oh, you wicked child, how dare you have that ugly ankle? I shall put on this painful iron band to teach you not to do it again." We should rather love the child more for its misfortune, and speak tenderly and with sympathy, "My poor child, I am heartily sorry for you; but I must put this iron band on your leg to make you grow up straight and strong, like other boys."

In just the same way if your son is born with a "temper," treat it as a misfortune, which it is as much his interest as yours to cure. In a friendly way, and without a trace of scolding, show him how undesirable and unlovable a thing temper is: be sorry for him; not distressed on your own account, but sorry he has such a difficulty to contend with. Above all, try to win him to co-operate with you in overcoming it.

Scolding or nagging at a child is the height of folly and injustice,—injustice, because in nineteen cases out of twenty, a child does not mean to do wrong, and in the twentieth he is not responsible for the evil instinct that makes him enjoy doing wrong; and folly because you can no more make a naughty child good by saying how naughty he is, than a cripple whole by saying, "How lame you are."

On the other hand, ill-judged scolding has exactly the opposite effect. A child who is truthful by nature may be taught to lie by having his word doubted, and the surest way to make a child naughty is to assure him he is so already. Only scold him enough, and the vanity inseparable from

human nature will make him gloat over his naughtiness as something unique and therefore distinguished. He will revel in his bad character like a miniature Byron, and often be naughty when he could just as soon be good, for the sake of keeping up his reputation.

"I saw an instance of this only the other day. I was going down a quiet street, and some children with their nurse were coming toward me. Just as they were within ear-shot, a little boy ran up to his little sister and, from pure maliciousness, struck her in the face. Then he stood still, exclaiming triumphantly: 'I've made Lily cry! I've made Lily cry!'"

"Oh, you naughty boy!" cried the nurse. "Oh, you naughty boy!" chorused the sisters. And the poor little wretch looked defiantly at me, the only spectator, with an expression that said:—

"There, see that! Did you ever see such a desperate villain as I am?"

The whole thing was so plainly a piece of "show off," solely for my benefit, that I spoke to him.

"Poor boy," I said, "I am so sorry for you."

"Why!" he asked astonished.

"Because you have that horrid, spiteful temper, and you don't seem to know how to cure it. So it will get worse and worse, till every one who knows you dislikes you. Your sister is all right. I am going to give her these cherries to comfort her now, and, when she grows up, she will be quite happy; but how very miserable you will be! Poor boy!"

I never saw a child look so amazed. That view of the matter had clearly never occurred to him: he had probably been told of his naughtiness till he was proud of it.

Children are all born actors; they will take readily any part you assign to them; but, somehow, the part that has most fascination for them is that of the villain of the drama.

On the other hand, if you start by assuming that the child means and would prefer to be good, you will rarely be disappointed.

As Charles Kingsley said, "God thought Ten Commandments sufficient, and parents have no right to perplex their children's minds by inventing twenty or thirty more." A dirty pinafore is not a crime, a spilled inkstand is only an accident, yet many a mother, because these things give immediate trouble to her, would make more fuss over them

than over serious faults of selfishness or falsehood.

I don't mean to say that a mother can make a child—if I may coin a word—untroublesome to herself by assuming that it will not be a trouble to her, but that she can cure all its more serious faults far easier if she will take it for granted that the child wishes to have them cured.

A naturally untruthful child—and, unfortunately, thanks to the parent, there are many such—may be taught truth by trust. I remember the case of a good-hearted governess appealing frankly to her youngest pupil. "Freddie," she said, "I have heard something that has made me so sorry. The girls say it is silly of me to believe you, because you tell lies. Is that so?"

The boy looked at her steadily, and then said "Yes," quietly and bravely. "But," he added, after a pause, "I never tell you any, because you believe me, and I never will."

He never did, and finding, presently, how pleasant it was to be trusted absolutely by one person, began to desire to be trusted by all; and before long not only won the trust he desired, but deserved it.

That boy had previously been scolded and punished for his fault times innumerable without the slightest result.

In all my experience of children, which, if it cannot be called long, has been wide and varied, I have never seen a child made better by scolding, and rarely by punishment,—this latter only when, by mismanagement, the poor child's character was in such a diseased state that friendly reasoning had no immediate effect on it, and there was no time to wait. Punishment is like the prompt slap on the back which saves the little one from choking.

By the way, I once heard a remarkably suggestive question from a little fellow, who had just undergone that surgical "slap." He was almost black in the face, but a prompt slap between the shoulders saved him. Directly he could get his breath he turned indignantly to his mother:—

"Mother, what's the matter with you that you're hittin' me?"

She explained, but the remark stayed in my mind. What is the matter with us when we scold or punish children? Half the time we are only relieving our own tempers or overwrought nerves, and not performing a surgical operation on the child's character at all.—*Selected.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

HOW TO SEE THE BIRDS.

A young woman, in talking the other day with a friend whose experience in some lines of nature-study had been greater than her own, said: "I feel quite discouraged about ever becoming acquainted with the birds. The trouble is that I don't know how to see them. Their movements are so quick that I can't accommodate my eyes to them well enough to distinguish form and markings with any distinctness. If a bird would politely stand still long enough for me to walk around him and really get a good look at him, there would be some probability of my recognizing him the next time we met. As it is, the case seems about hopeless, unless you can give me a recipe for quick-seeing eyes."

Other people have experienced similar difficulty, in the outset, in studying birds,—people, too, who love nature, and who know many of the flowers and trees and rocks of their neighborhood, but whose eyes have not been trained to "quick seeing."

To some such a few suggestions, growing out of experience with a pair of eyes which, not many seasons ago, were as slow to see as anybody's could be—if physically in a normal condition, I mean—and which have become so keen as, to be a constant surprise to their possessor, may not be amiss.

The prime necessity is a note-book.

Begin with the first bird you see. Perhaps it will be the robin. Don't disdain him because he is one of the very few birds that you think you do know. Watch him as he hops about the yard. Note how he really looks to you. Estimate his length, the general color of the upper parts, of the breast and under parts. In your note-book put down what you *actually see* yourself, not what your reading of bird-books makes you think you ought to see. Describe the colors by terms that recall the exact shade to you. Don't call the back brown and the breast red, if dusky and mahogany seem truer terms. These general colorings may be all you will see the first time you look. The second time, perhaps you will notice that the head and the back of the neck are considerably darker than the rest of the back. You may have a suspicion, when he flies, that there was a little white about the tail. Make a note of it, with a question-mark, if necessary. The next time you will see that the tips of the outer tail-feathers are white.

Every time you look at the robin, for a while, you will discover something new to note. You will observe the color of the bill and legs, the shape of the tail. Some day you will see the fine white line over the eye. Besides the description of his appearance, note the time and place of your seeing him, also what he was doing. You may be fortunate enough to be able to watch the nest-building and the growth of the little ones. Make careful notes of everything you see. Every observation helps toward quicker seeing next time.

Now take another bird. Perhaps it will be the familiar chippy. Did you ever notice before that the top of his head is cinnamon-brown, that there are straight black lines back from the corners of his eyes, as if he had spectacles on, that his breast is a smooth ashy gray, that he is considerably smaller than his despised cousin, the English sparrow?

Now may come a bird that you do not know by name. Perhaps it is a little grayish bird that is perched quite still on the end of a dry twig. Once you could not have told him from a chippy; but you have noticed that the chippy has a cinnamon-colored crown, that his bill is short, that you have usually seen him hopping about in the grass. This little visitor has an olive-gray head, a rather long, sharp bill, he sits very erect, and you almost think that he occasionally raises a slight crest. Suddenly he darts off into the air to catch a passing insect, and is back again before you can think. The name flycatcher passes through your mind. You turn to your handbook, and read what is said of the flycatcher family. You compare your notes with the descriptions of the different members of the family, and presently you read that of the least flycatcher. The description is almost identical with your own. You know another bird.

Some day you will see, balanced on a tall grass or on a topmost tree-branch, perhaps, a bird nearly as large as a robin. You will only see that he is dark above and almost white below, and that the tail-feathers are tipped with white. You wouldn't know where to look for him in your handbook, but you recall something familiar in his form and in his erect attitude. Where have you seen an outline like that? Ah, the least flycatcher! You turn to the flycatcher family again, and it is easy to find that this is the king-bird. You will be interested to

know that another bird is added to your list, but you will care more to realize that you are beginning to see. A little while ago you couldn't have told whether a bird perched in an erect position or not. In fact, you had an impression that a bird didn't do much but fly.

The rapidity with which your seeing power will develop after a few months of careful watching and careful note-taking will surprise you. Only be sure that your notes are absolutely true records of what you really see, it may be but one thing at a time at first, with the uncertain points marked as uncertain.

You will learn in time to note everything. At first be on the lookout for the general color above and below, any striking patches of color, the shape of the bill, the length of the tail, the sort of flight,—direct or bounding,—the favorite haunts, in trees or bushes, by water, near houses, or in the woods. Notice, also, whether your bird walks or hops when on the ground. Note his song in syllables of your own. He might not recognize your English translation, but have it such that you can recognize it.

With the aid of books, you will make at least a little study of the different bird families, and you will soon be no more apt to mistake a warbler for a thrush than you would a Scotchman for an Italian. The Italian *looks* like an Italian, and the warbler *looks* like a warbler.

One day last summer two young women had a chance to watch a chewink, or ground-robin. One had just begun to observe and take notes, the other had had the habit for several seasons. Each noted just what she saw.

The first wrote: "Chewink: size, about that of robin; upper parts, black; under parts, light; a distinct black mark under throat."

The second wrote: "Chewink: length, about 8½ inches; head and upper parts, black; breast, black, sharply defined from ash of under parts; sides, chestnut; tail, black; outer quills, mostly white; bill, black; iris, red.

"Seen in pine-trees and under huckleberry bushes. It flew with a bobbing motion, as if its tail were weighted; flights short. Did not stay long in one place when alighted.

"Note, 'tow-ree,'—harsh.

"Think it raised a crest."

You notice how much more the second observer saw than the first; but, from what

I know of the two people, I doubt if the second would have seen as much as the first did, had it not been for previous months of careful note-taking.—*Estelle M. Hart, in the Outlook.*

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

FACTORY CHILDREN (*continued*).

When Lord Ashley* accepted the responsibility of taking up Mr. Sadler's benevolent measures, he was only known in the factory districts as having voted for those measures: his special aptitude and general fitness for the task had to be taken on trust. From all quarters, however, there came to him promises of support, and foremost among those who welcomed him as their champion was Mr. Oastler, who had worked with unflagging zeal in the cause.

It was consistent with the fairness of his dealings, then and always, to give to Mr. Sadler, and to those who had labored with him, the credit of their labors, nor did he ever alter his tone. In 1868, when he published his *Speeches*, he stated in the preface: "I desire to record the invaluable services of the remarkable men who preceded me. Had they not gone before and borne such an amount of responsibility and toil, I do not believe that it would have been in my power to have achieved anything at all." And to the end of his life he never ceased, when speaking on the Factory Question, to give to them the honor which was their due.

The activity of Lord Ashley, and those associated with him, aroused the opponents of the measure to renewed determination to resist it, step by step, with corresponding energy and firmness.

Meanwhile the work of Lord Ashley had been incessant. He had made it a matter of principle at the outset of his career—and he never wavered from it to the close of his life—not to take up any subject or advocate any cause until, as far as it lay in his power, he had acquainted himself with all the facts of the case, not at second-hand and from hearsay, but by close personal investigation. From the hour he consented to take the leadership in this movement he was at work night and day in prosecuting inquiries and in making himself master of all its details. This involved endless visits

and conferences, innumerable letters, and an amount of toil which can scarcely be overestimated.

"I made it an invariable rule," he said on many occasions to the writer, "to see everything with my own eyes, to take nothing on trust or hearsay. In factories I examined the mills, the machinery, the homes, and saw the workers and their work in all its details. In collieries I went down into the pits. In London I went into lodging-houses and thieves' haunts, and every filthy place. It gave me a power I could not otherwise have had. I could speak of things from actual experience, and I used often to hear things from the poor sufferers themselves which were invaluable to me. I got to know their habits of thought and action, and their actual wants. I sat and had tea and talk with them hundreds of times."

The bill was opposed by Lord Althorp, who urged that it should be rejected in favor of one founded on the report of the commission. Notwithstanding all the efforts made by Lord Ashley and his friends, the government bill was carried, on a division, by an overwhelming majority.

Lord Ashley did not abandon hope, although at first sight everything seemed against him. He rose, on the speaker resuming the chair, and said: "Having taken up the subject fairly and conscientiously, he found that the noble lord [Althorp] had completely defeated him. He would, therefore, surrender the bill into the hands of the noble lord; but, having taken it up with a view to do good to the class intended, he would only say, into whatever hands it passed, God prosper it."

Although the measure fell far short of what was desired, and would take effect slowly, inasmuch as it would not come into full operation until 1836, "it contained, nevertheless, some humane and highly useful provisions, and established, for the first time, the great principle that labor and education should be combined."

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

November, 1833.

Dear James,—I cannot give you a better idea of Greenough's statue of Medora than by recording some of the conversations that have taken place there:—

"Really, this is very fine! What proportion! what a mattress! what a pillow! almost equal to Canova. Observe this, ob-

*Lord Ashley was Lord Shaftesbury's title before he succeeded to the earldom.

serve that. I saw this statue in Greenough's studio, before it was half finished."

"Well! It is very good certainly, but I am sure it would give me the blues to have such a thing constantly before me. I should like it for my tomb, but really it is too much like a corpse to have in one's house. He must have had the blues all the time he was making that figure."

"Not at all. On the contrary, he was never merrier in his life. I was with him all the time he was making it,—in fact, while he was selecting the marble it is made of. He had a vast deal of trouble to get a pure block. I know all the difficulties of these things."

"What! do you call this Medora? I expected something quite different, not such a soft, beautiful little creature as this. I like this hand though. What a dear little thumb and dimpled fingers! It is the funniest little thumb I ever saw, positively."

"What a shame that her feet are covered up! I would give more to see her little feet than any other part. I can just see her toes peeping up. Why *did* he cover them?"

"Oh! Splendid, magnificent! Looks just like Anna R. Perfect! I should think she had just been laid down. How her head sinks in the pillow. A countryman came in here the other day and wanted to lift up the sheet."

"Yes, I don't doubt it; for a countryman that I saw declared it was not marble, but an angel just fallen from the skies."

"How do you do, Miss Medora? She won't answer me now, but the other day she opened her eyes and said, 'Is that you, Conrad?' And I said, 'No, dear: shut your eyes and go to sleep again.'"

Man in the corner.—"Now that all these frivolous people are gone, I can enjoy this beautiful work of art. How divine is the expression of this marble! What grace! How faultless the form and how divine the face! It has the languor of death without its ghastliness, the beauty of life without its motion and disturbance. It bears the strong impression of the soul."

"Such is the aspect of this shore," etc.

"Enchanting Medora! Thou art the image which excited the feeling expressed in 'He who hath bent him on the dead.'"

"Greenough! Thou surpasses the moderns, thou rivallest the ancients. Thou art no cold imitator of the classics. Essentially modern and romantic in thy genius, thou wilt be the poet-sculptor of thy country."

Man in the other corner.—"What's that you say? Is Greenough superior to Canova? The crier said the other day, when he cried the sale of Canova's statues, that he was the greatest genius that ever existed, and he knows; for Robert G. Shaw that imported the statues said so, too."

Doorkeeper.—"Not he. Mr. Thom is the greatest genius of all; for he can cut these things out without any model, and it takes Greenough as much as six months to make his model."

"I say, Tam O'Shanter's the best figure of all."

A new party enters. They remain silent for the space of half an hour. Sounds confused and a little tumultuous are heard from the adjoining room.

"Is that a billiard room? What ungracious sounds! We ought rather to be regaled with soft music. A requiem sung or a dirge chanted would harmonize better."

Enter another party which mixes with the former.

"How are you pleased with Medora, Miss?"

"Very well, sir."

"Is this the first time you have seen her?"

"Yes, sir."

"Which do you like the best?"

"I don't know, sir."

Not much satisfaction here: try another.

"How are you pleased with Medora, Miss B.?"

"Oh, quite well. Have you heard from Lucretia lately?"

"No, ma'am."

"Ah! Mr. N. How do you do? This is beautiful, is it not? Who does it look like?"

"My daughter Caroline, I rather think."

"Oh, so it does. It is not as large as life, is it?"

"Why, I should think it about the size of Caroline W."

"Wonderful chiselling, is it not, Mr. E.?" etc.

"Yes, but for my part I like more of the ideal."

For my own part I think it most beautiful. The face has a beauty of the most pure and elevated character. The hair clings closely to the head, revealing its beautiful oval shape, and then flows away over the pillows in three distinct masses. One hand lies upon her breast, and the other loosely holds some flowers by her side. The head is a little thrown back and displays the beautiful throat, and gives a look of helpless

grace that is very touching. A drapery conceals all the lower part of the figure and, covering the feet, gives the general look of death. He has most happily fixed the expression of tranquil, peaceful repose that death often leaves upon the countenance. She looks like one who has undertaken all and endured all, and yet whose nature remains perfect, untorn, unwearied, who felt not the breaking of her own heart. A proof of its real beauty is that you do not forget it at all.

Mr. Thom's statues you should have seen. They are complete specimens of nature in its actual, present, unconscious state. Full of natural glee. You cannot help sympathy with them even if you would. They are so full of life that, when the spectators go up among them and you stay at a distance, you see that the real people are dead compared with them. Every one found something to like in them. Those who could not yield to the impression and be merry with the cobbler, laugh with the landlord, joke with Tam, and be interested in the whole with the landlady, still found pleasure in seeing how every seam was put in the coat, how well the stockings imitated coarse knitting, and how nicely the landlady's cap and apron were ruffled. Our little Tam paid them a visit, and excited much amusement by his remarks. He exclaimed that he could even see the dust on Tam's shoes, and found out many beauties that had hitherto escaped observation. The old man who kept the door was enchanted to have so well satisfied a visitor.

MONTHLY REPORT.

The regular monthly meeting was held at 25 Beacon Street, on Friday, April 1, with Miss Clarke in the chair. Twenty-seven were present. The reports of the secretary and treasurer were read, and Miss Brown reported that one hundred and six "travelling libraries" were now in use. There are eleven names on the waiting list, and eleven names have been assigned during the month.

Miss Clarke made an appeal for some one to take charge of the "Amusement Column,"—a part of *The Cheerful Letter* that has proved very popular. The friend who has kindly given her services for some time can do so no longer.

An interesting letter was read from a new applicant in Arkansas.

Reports were given by representatives

from sixteen branches, and five reported by letter.

The Belmont Branch has two travelling libraries in use, and a third is soon to be sent out.

The branch of the First Parish, Brookline, has sent during two months 798 books and magazines and 8 Bibles. A correspondent had written that much brightness and pleasure had come into his home through the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

The Framingham committee has for some time taken magazines to a crossing tender, and now also takes them to an electric car station, where conductors and motormen often wait several hours. One of the girls who is being taught "by letter" has not only made much improvement in a year, but seems also to have acquired the spirit of helpfulness, and is anxious to pass on to others the help and pleasure given her by her correspondent.

The Marlboro committee has given a "chafing-dish supper" to raise money for the work. Since it was organized in 1901, the committee has sent 1,175 letters, 43 boxes of reading, 13,883 books and magazines, 125 packages, and has two "travelling libraries." A letter was read from Mrs. Hay of Montana, who is now thirty miles from a post-office.

The branch of the First Church, Salem, has a new library of seventy-five books ready for use, and the Chestnut Hill branch has sent out a children's library of seventy-two books.

The other branches reported good work done during the month.

The secretary stated that there is still need of adding to the subscription list of *The Cheerful Letter*. About three hundred and fifty more subscriptions are necessary to bring the number up to two thousand, the point at which the paper would be practically self-supporting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.05.

BERTHA LANGMAID,
Secretary.

We are sorry to hear of the death of Mrs. Mattie Bolcon, Nesbit, Nebraska. It occurred February 7, but the news was not received in time for insertion in the April number.

This alone is true friendship,—to see what is good deep down in another's soul, to help that upward into life, and enable it to conquer outward frivolity and evil.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, Box 91, South Framingham, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

The voice of the soul is not to be silenced.
Felix Adler.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Miss Frances B. Fisher, our Assistant Secretary, is to be absent in Europe for several months. Will members and others kindly notice this, and send requests for correspondents to Miss M. A. Macomber, Framingham, Mass., until further notice?

The address, formerly Miss Lizzie Bailey, Brooks, Maine, is now Mrs. Lizzie M. Smith, Monroe, Maine, R. F. D. No. 2.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY,—Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. Charles T. Catlin, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks should be made payable to Mary Louise Catlin.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Mrs. Catlin at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.